

Lesson  
2**First Words and Titles****Teaching**

Capitalize these words:

- the first word of every sentence
- the first word of every line of traditional poetry
- the first word of a direct quotation if it is a complete sentence (Do not capitalize the first word of the second part of a divided quotation unless it starts a new sentence.)

“My favorite book is *Where the Red Fern Grows*,” said Lesley.

“We just bought,” exclaimed Owen, “two tickets to see *The Miser* next week.”

- the first word of each item in an outline and letters that introduce major subsections

I. Types of literature

A. Drama

1. Comedy

2. Tragedy

- the first word in the greeting of a letter and the first word in the closing
- the first word, the last word, and all other important words in titles (don’t capitalize articles, conjunctions, or prepositions of fewer than five letters.)

**Capitalizing First Words and Titles**

Underline the words that should be capitalized in each of the following items.

1. “i like,” Luther commented, “reading a play before I go to see it.”
2. each year, we read several plays in our English class.
3. this year we will read and then see a live performance of *macbeth* by William Shakespeare.
4. dear Lynette,  
The Festival Playhouse is pleased to announce that you have been selected to play Juliet in our upcoming performance of *romeo and juliet*. Congratulations.  
sincerely,  
Cleo Wilson, President, Festival Playhouse
5. Aisha said, “my favorite playwright is Tennessee Williams, who wrote *the glass menagerie*.”
6. “many plays,” Mrs. Richardson explained, “have been turned into successful musicals, such as *pygmalion*, which is better known as *my fair lady*.”
7. I. drama
  - a. elements of drama
    1. plot
    2. character

**First Words and Titles****More Practice****A. Capitalizing First Words and Titles**

In the following sentences underline the words that should be capitalized but are not. If the sentence contains no capitalization errors, write **Correct** on the line.

1. "Watch out!" warned the mine inspector. "the cable has snapped!" \_\_\_\_\_
2. In *julius caesar*, Mark Antony says, "friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears." \_\_\_\_\_
3. "I think," said the doctor, "that you need a good rest." \_\_\_\_\_
4. the sun that brief December day  
rose cheerless over hills of gray  
John Greenleaf Whittier \_\_\_\_\_
5. we read the poem "a certain slant of light" by Emily Dickinson. \_\_\_\_\_
6. natalie sang "the star-spangled banner" before the kickoff. \_\_\_\_\_
7. ralph can play "down in the valley" and "the yellow rose of Texas" on the guitar. \_\_\_\_\_
8. "did you hear," Ida asked, "our classmate Brian playing the piano at the talent show?" \_\_\_\_\_
9. all students of American government should read *the federalist papers*. \_\_\_\_\_
10. "many paintings," our art teacher told us, "are based on stories from Greek mythology, such as the story of Icarus and his wax wings." \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Capitalizing First Words in Outlines**

Underline each letter that should be capitalized in the following outline.

Works of Edgar Allan Poe

- I. poems
  - a. "annabel lee"
  - b. "the raven"
- II. tales of horror
  - a. "the pit and the pendulum"
  - b. "the masque of the red death"
  - c. "the fall of the house of usher"

**Lesson  
2****First Words and Titles****Application****A. Writing a Conversation**

Continue the conversation of two people coming out of a theater. The speakers have seen an award-winning movie, but they have differing opinions about it. Have the two speakers compare this movie (you can decide which movie) with other movies they have seen. Include at least two other titles. Be sure to capitalize the quotations and titles correctly.

"I can see why that movie got the award," said Glenn. "It was one of the best movies I've ever seen."

"Well, I didn't think it was that good," replied Gina. "In fact, I can name at least two films I liked better. One of them should have gotten the award."

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**B. Writing an Outline Using Capital Letters Correctly**

Read the following brief report. Then write a short outline for it on the lines below. Be sure to capitalize correctly.

Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in Wisconsin in 1867. Her family moved around, and she grew up living on the American frontier. In 1885 she married farmer Almanzo Wilder. They survived through some hardships and eventually settled in Missouri.

Many years later, at the urgings of her daughter, Wilder began to write about her childhood. Her books became known as the Little House series, beginning with *Little House in the Big Woods*. The books, including *Little House on the Prairie* and *On the Banks of Plum Creek*, were loosely based on her family's westward travels. For her work she won five Newbery Medals and received the first Laura Ingalls Wilder Award.

The Life of Laura Ingalls Wilder

**I. Early life**


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**II. Later life**


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